

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Introduction:

Claim 20 is amended and claims 21-22 are canceled. Claims 5, 10-15, and 17 have previously been canceled. With entry of this amendment, claims 1-4, 6-9, 16, 18-20, and 23 will be pending.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112:

Claim 20 has been amended to specify that entries in the local director are updated when a connection is made with a new natural class. This subject matter is disclosed in the specification, as originally filed, at page 21, lines 18-20. As amended, claim 20 is believed to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103:

Claims 1-4, 6-9, 16, 18-20, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,445,704 (Howes et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,754,706 (Swildens et al.).

The Howes et al. patent issued September 3, 2002 and is assigned to Cisco Technology, Inc., which is the same assignee as the subject patent application.

The American Inventors Protection Act (AIPA) amended 35 U.S.C. § 103(c) to exclude subject matter developed by another person which qualifies as prior art under Section 102(e), provided that this subject matter and the claimed invention were commonly owned at the time the claimed invention was made.

This amendment to Section 103(c) applies to patent applications filed on or after November 29, 1999. (American Inventors Protection Act of 1999, Pub. L. No. 106-113,

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Sec. 4807(b)). The subject patent application was filed after November 29, 1999 and the invention was commonly owned with the subject matter of the Howes et al. patent at the time the invention was made.

Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6-9, 16, 18-20, and 23 are submitted as patentable.

IV. Conclusion:

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant believes that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and should be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would in any way expedite the prosecution of the application, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned at (408) 446-8695.

Respectfully submitted,



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